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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

Issue #43

FEB 14 '76 August 20, 1976

CSC PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT REPORTS TO BE MADE PUBLIC.....A Federal Court has ruled that the Civil Service Commission policy of not releasing personnel management evaluation reports violates the Freedom of Information Act. The Court has, however, upheld the right of the CSC to withhold information which identifies individual employees, as well as recommendations for agency action. CSC has, nevertheless, decided to release their recommendations, and the findings, to the public. All evaluation reports published after July 1, 1976, will be available in the CSC library. (Contact: Gloria Torres, OP, ext. 72973)

SWINE FLU VACCINE.....The Department has ordered swine flu vaccine which is expected to be received by late September. The shots will be given to all employees free of charge. The vaccine is being furnished to the Department at no cost. When definite delivery for the vaccine has been established, notification will be furnished to all employees on the availability of the shots. (Contact: O. Jacykewycz, M.D., OP, ext 73893)

BRICKYARD PROPERTY (ARBORETUM).....Congress has appropriated funds to acquire a 33-acre tract of land adjoining the National Arboretum. This land will provide a long needed main entrance to the Arboretum from New York Avenue. Because of increased public interest in the horticultural activities at the Arboretum, plans are being made to provide additional educational and public service facilities, as well as an area for public parking. (Contact: Ladelle Ray, 00, ext. 75225)

USDA PROCUREMENT.....USDA administrative procurement (procurement of other than agricultural commodities) for FY 76 totaled \$352,726,000, a 14% increase over FY 75. A breakdown shows:

<u>Type of Procurement</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Formally Advertised	\$ 74,852,000	21%
Small Business Set-aside	120,270,000	34%
Negotiated	90,194,000	26%
From Other Agencies	67,410,000	19%

Procurement awarded to small business amounted to \$240,724,000, a 13% increase over FY 75.

Procurement of construction totaled \$93,416,000, a 32% increase over FY 75. (Contact: Dean Smith, 00, ext. 77527)

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USDA SPACE SURVEY.....GSA has awarded the space consultant contract for the USDA complex to Hunter Miller and Associates of Alexandria, Virginia. The orientation process has begun and the contractor has started the survey. The success of the project depends on agency staff cooperating with the contractor in this survey. (Contact: Bill Hamilton, OO, ext. 73141)

ROBERT E. MAGEE NAMED DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OI.....Robert E. Magee, presently the Assistant Director, General Investigations, OI, has been appointed to the position of Deputy Director, OI. Mr. Magee will assume his new duties effective August 29. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

TEST OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEM.....A test of the fire alarm system in the Administration, South, Auditors, and Cotton Annex Buildings was held on July 8. All alarm bells were found to be operating during this test.

A fire drill and building evacuation for all USDA Washington complex buildings, including the GHI Building, is planned for October during National Fire Prevention Week. Additional details will be made available later. (Contact: Carl Tant, OI, ext. 76001)

USDA PRODUCTIVITY.....For the past four years, USDA has participated in a government-wide program to measure and improve productivity. This program has been a joint undertaking of the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program, OMB, and CSC, with technical support provided by BLS. Responsibility for maintenance of this data has recently been transferred to the newly established National Center for Productivity.

Twelve USDA agencies have participated in productivity measurement reporting on 196 activities covering approximately 50% of the total USDA workforce.

This table shows weighted outputs, employee-year inputs, and productivity for the USDA. The government-wide index, covering 66% of the total civilian workforce, is shown for comparison.

	1972	1973	1974	1975
USDA Weighted Output	100.0	103.8	103.0	103.1
USDA Employee-years Input	100.0	99.8	97.2	95.9
USDA Productivity	100.0	104.0	106.0	107.5
Government-wide Productivity	100.0	102.7	102.2	104.1

(Contact: Ken Hatch, OMF, ext. 75301)

BUDGET PROCEEDINGS.....

- ...FY 77 Funds. Requests for apportionment of FY 77 funds are due in OMB by August 20. It is anticipated that approved apportionments will be returned to agencies prior to the beginning of FY 77.
- ...FY 78 Budget Requests. Agency meetings with the Secretary on the FY 78 budget requests will resume on August 30. The Department's FY 78 budget request is due in OMB by September 15.
(Contact: Bob Barham, OMF, ext. 75901)

AGENCY PAPERWORK MANAGEMENT REPORTS DUE IN OMF.....

- ...Reports Inventory for GAO. The annual inventory of reports submitted by USDA to Congress is due in GAO by September 17. Agencies will be contacted shortly with the instructions.
- ...Forms, Reports, and Record Holdings Inventory. Agency reports on these three items are due in OMF by October 15. Agencies have been provided with instructions. (Contact: Peter J. Doyle, OMF, ext. 75725)

CURRENT LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY.....

- ...AGRICULTURE RESEARCH POLICY ACT (WAMPLER BILL).....The House passed HR 11743, the Agriculture Research Policy Act. This bill would:
 - Authorize an additional Assistant Secretary post.
 - Create a 22 member advisory board to the Secretary.
 - Assign additional research responsibility to the Secretary.
 - Create new, competitive, and mission-oriented programs.
- ...USDA EXECUTIVE POSITIONS.....The House passed HR 10133 upgrading the position of Under Secretary to Deputy Secretary and creating an additional Assistant Secretary position. This bill would upgrade the position of the Administrator of APHIS to Executive Level V. The House rejected an amendment to upgrade the position of FNS Administrator to Executive Level V. This bill will be taken up by the Senate when they reconvene.
- ...PACKER BONDING.....The Senate agreed to the conference report on HR 8410 amending the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921. This bill will provide greater protection for livestock producers.
- ...FOOD STAMP REFORMS.....The House Agriculture Committee voted to report HR 13613, Food Stamp Reforms.
- ...DIRECT MARKETING.....The Senate passed HR 10339, with amendments, on July 30. This bill permits direct marketing of agricultural commodities from farmer to consumer, and now goes to conference.
- ...LANGUAGE TRAINING.....Conferees agreed to file a conference report on S3052 which would provide language training for USDA employees, and their families, prior to overseas assignments.
- ...SUNSHINE BILL.....Conferees agreed to file a conference report on S5 which would provide that meetings of government agencies be open to the public, with certain exceptions as provided for in the bill.
(Contact: John Mottershead, OMF, ext. 74654)

KCCC/SLCC COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT.....A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been sent to GSA requesting a Delegation of Procurement Authority (DPA) for a computer system to replace the existing computer systems now installed in Kansas City and St. Louis. (Contact: Ray Long, ADS, ext. 74789)

ST. LOUIS COMPUTER CENTER GAO AUDIT.....USDA forwarded comments to GAO in response to their Audit Report on SLCC concerning the B4781 Interim Computers. (Contact: H. W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

A-11 FALL CALL.....Agencies have until August 31 to provide their submission to ADS. (Contact: Bob Head, ADS, ext. 77543)

DID YOU KNOW THAT RDS.....

- ...Provided resource counseling and technical and coordination assistance to 960 rural communities in 1975.
- ...Represented USDA and rural interests on 32 intra-agency task forces and committees working to facilitate more equitable distribution of Federal resources in rural areas.
- ...Initiated over 200 personal conferences on rural development with senior program managers and high-level policy executives in 45 Federal agencies. The agency reviewed and prepared USDA comments on new legislation having an impact on rural areas.
- ...Coordinated and developed USDA responses for congressional hearings and provided general information to members of Congress.
- ...Jointly funded, with FmHA, a study on criteria for planning rural health care systems and standards and guidelines for funding them.
- ...Led in development of Federal Assistance Programs Retrieval System (FAPRS), a unique computerized program for agencies to use in helping rural communities obtain Federal assistance.
- ...Arranged for training of over 200 rural leaders from 32 states in the National Rural Development Leaders School.
- ...Set up roundtable conferences for some 200 Federal, state, and local employees to improve rural development coordination.
- ...Provided the secretariat for the National Rural Development Committee and served as liaison to 50 state rural development committees.
- ...Contacted and worked with state and local government groups, planning districts, and other organizations to activate rural development initiatives.
- ...Continued its one-stop service to handle requests for rural development information and publications. The agency replied to nearly 2,400 inquiries and supplied approximately 55,000 publications.
- ...Coordinated production of interagency reports required annually by law on rural development goals, financial, and technical assistance for non-metropolitan planning districts, and information and technical assistance and government services to rural areas.
- ...Placed additional emphasis on disseminating information through news and features to promote rural development. Developed special fact sheets on new resources, an updated guide to Federal programs, an inventory of resource information on Federal assistance programs for dissemination on request, and promotional radio and TV shows, films, exhibits, and a slide presentation.